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THE  
FESTIVAL OF THE ROSE,

WITH OTHER

P O E M S,

*By Mrs. MONTOLIEU.*

LONDON:

PRINTED BY T. BENSLEY, BOLT-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

1802.



**THE**  
**FESTIVAL OF THE ROSE.**





## ADVERTISEMENT.

*The Festival of the Rose is not a fiction; it has been celebrated at the village of Salency in Picardy for upwards of twelve hundred years. It was instituted by a Lord of the Manor, under the reigns of Childeric and Clovis, in the fifth century. This respectable man gave yearly to the village-maid of Salency, who bore the fairest reputation, a hat or crown of roses, and she was certain of being sought in marriage in the course of that year. It is said he paid the distinguished tribute to one of his own sisters, whom the public voice deemed worthy of the Rose. This reward became a powerful motive for good conduct in the young women of Salency, and there were instances of more than*

*one candidate for the Rose in the same year. By the rules of the institution, not only the fair claimant, but her parents, brothers, and sisters, were to be deemed irreproachable, and the slightest deviation, even from order, excluded the candidate. It is hardly possible to conceive how this reward contributed to excite in the people of Salency the love of virtue and regularity. All the inhabitants, composed of forty-eight families, were sober, industrious, honest, and benevolent, and there is not an example of a gross misdemeanor having been committed there by a native.*



## THE FESTIVAL OF THE ROSE.

### PART THE FIRST.

WITH unresisted sway has Passion long  
Glowed in the breathings of poetic song;  
Ye fair! O leave awhile the tempting page,  
And let a nobler strain your hearts engage!



Virtue for once in gay attire would strive  
 To rival love, yet keep delight alive;  
 But should her aim through these weak numbers fail,  
 Should frowns condemn the dull but well meant tale,  
 By one soft sonnet every care remove,  
 And give your souls again to joy and love.

And thou, dear native vale! of whom I dream  
 While Cambria's distant landscape seems my theme;  
 Ye woods of Devon, still to Fancy dear!  
 Translucent stream, whose murmurs still I hear!  
 Forgive, if Memory's tints to Feeling true,  
 Refuse to yield to Fiction's fainter hue;  
 If Poesy herself despair to trace  
 Those lines beloved, which Time can ne'er efface.  
 Thus, to disguise his love, the enamoured swain  
 To some imagined object breathes his pain;

And thus, O Muse! to imaged scenes I soar,  
Far from those beauties I must view no more.  
A theme less dear shall happier lays impart,  
While the true form lies pictured in the heart.

There is a village little known to fame,  
(I call it Milton, for I love the name)  
No fairer village blessed Arcadia's plains,  
Nor Auburn's bard lamented happier swains.  
By mountains sheltered from the northern gale,  
Its airy site in turn protects the vale,  
Whose emerald meads a river flows along,  
Recorded haply in the Druid's song.  
There, safe from tempests, flourish stately trees,  
And singly scattered woo the summer breeze;  
While o'er bright pebbles wandering as it will,  
A silver serpent winds along the hill,

Plays mid the cottages, then through the wood  
O'er rocky fragments gushes to the flood.

To paint the natives of this favoured spot,  
Their simple virtues, and distinguished lot,  
Mock not, O Muse! my legendary page,  
With far-fetched figures from the golden age;  
Nor dream the rude, unlettered form they wore  
Of clowns, who know to toil, and know no more.  
What cannot virtue joined to power achieve,  
Warm to improve, and active to relieve?

A castle frowns, arrayed in Gothic pride,  
Deep in the valley by the crystal tide,  
On whose opposing bank wild mountains rise,  
And lose their oak-crowned summits in the skies.  
In this retreat a gentle couple dwelt,  
As e'er for misery sighed, for anguish felt;

The high-born Egbert, still in manhood's prime,  
Pledged to beneficence his wealth, and time;  
Though oft in senates heard, by crowds admired,  
Now mid his long-loved fields he lived retired,  
Despising pomp, improved his vast domain,  
And urged to industry the rustic train;  
Enticed a son, on whom his soul was placed,  
Through paths of rectitude, by science graced;  
And blessed in love with all that man holds dear,  
Found Earth Elysium with Matilda here.

She with the beauty of her sex combined  
Each soul-subduing grace of womankind;  
With taste and feelings tempered to enjoy  
The gay delights that female life employ,  
She knew their magic, and allurements fled,  
To safer joys by love and prudence led.



Now, child of Genius, with delight she roved  
Among the scenes sublime her pencil loved;  
Now with botanic eye explored the sod,  
And traced in every herb and flower her God;  
Or while her white arms clasped the sounding lyre,  
Sung to wild chords, what love and bliss inspire;  
From her mild features melting kindness beamed;  
A gift of Heaven to indigence she seemed:  
Her bounties fell, as May's soft vapours fall,  
Unseen, and silent, but reviving all,  
And ne'er since Egbert gained Matilda's hand  
Had Want's chill lineaments defaced the land.

The gentle dame, to solitude resigned,  
Yet felt the yearnings of an active mind;  
For restless Nature, though supremely blessed,  
Frets with monotony, or sinks depressed.

To extend her bloom beyond youth's fleeting hour,  
To wake to energy each tender power,  
No fair usurpers of a mother's charms  
Made joys of care, and pleasure of alarms.  
Oft as she pondered tales of other times,  
And marked the various rites of various climes,  
The Rose of Salency her fancy caught,  
And dwelt revolving in her busy thought:  
' And why,' she cried, ' shall Albion's ample field  
' In virtuous deeds the palm to Gallia yield?  
' Why, mid the numerous offerings made to Vice,  
' No glorious meed to female worth entice?  
' O Virtue! Milton too shall worship thee,  
' Nor yield her bloomy wreath to Salency.'  
And now she chose the spot, and fixed the day,  
And warm benevolence chased care away;

No more her bosom for an impulse pined,  
 The promised scene electrified her mind.

On the large oak's fantastic branch displayed,  
 That near the house of God dispensed a shade,  
 Wove by her snowy hand, a flowery wreath  
 Held the light talisman that waved beneath,  
 Where, soon in every rustic heart enchased,  
 These words in golden characters were traced:

- ' Ye village fair! who panting for renown,
- ' From youth and beauty seek a transient crown,
- ' Whose virgin hearts have numbered sixteen years,
- ' And now grown conscious, swell with hopes and fears,
- ' Let the warm glow a nobler aim inspire;
- ' Learn to excel, and Virtue's meed acquire.
- ' Observe great Nature's choicest gifts among
- ' Some object still supreme amid the throng;

‘ Mark mighty Snowdon’s cloud-surpassing height;  
 ‘ Mark yon bright star amid the gems of night;  
 ‘ And hear the nightingale in Ervyn’s grove,  
 ‘ With note excelling, mourn her absent love:  
 ‘ That nymph whose emulative mind shall claim  
 ‘ The bright distinction of unsullied fame,  
 ‘ Who shuns with stedfast step the snares of youth,  
 ‘ And keeps unblemished modesty and truth,  
 ‘ With toil and temper pays parental care,  
 ‘ And seeks with holy awe the house of prayer,  
 ‘ Crowned with the Rose, shall hail the happy hour  
 ‘ When Hope led Virtue to her cottage bower.’

Matilda yearly held her rural courts  
 On the green theatre of rustic sports,  
 Where oft beneath the umbrageous foliage placed,  
 She with her lord the grateful circle graced,



Would join the dance, or with a smile engage  
To hear the oft-told tale of trembling age;  
Where'er she turned, her object still the same,  
Conferring benefits that want a name.

Labour and penury too oft remove  
The rose of beauty from the cheek of Love;  
But bounded plenty, intervals from toil,  
The mountain breezes, and the cultured soil,  
The blush of innocence, the smile of truth,  
Gave God's own finish to the charms of youth.  
The nymphs of Milton were the shepherd's dream,  
The nymphs of Milton were the poet's theme,  
And ne'er did idolizing lover swear  
By eyes so bright as daily opened there.  
And now to deck my votive numbers, Muse!  
Matilda's brightest constellation choose.

Fresh as Aurora, as an angel true,  
Clear as the rill her eyes celestial blue,  
Wild as the fawn, but innocent as wild,  
The pretty Rosalind on Nature smiled.  
Her cares were pleasures, and her duties choice;  
The bliss of others made her heart rejoice;  
So pure her mind, her passions so serene,  
She scarcely guessed what chastity might mean,  
Or whence arose her blush unbidden knew,  
When modest Nature raised the charming hue.  
But Virtue loth that Apathy should share  
Her influence o'er the bosom of the fair,  
Bade Love assail with every soft desire,  
And prove her faith as gold is proved by fire.  
Once when to feed a kid whose dam had strayed,  
Among the wild rocks climbed the active maid,

A new Apollo, of the sylvan chace,  
Beheld her supple form, her glowing face.  
In vain, with Daphne's haste, she strove to shun  
The path of Edmund, noble Egbert's son;  
In vain, with downcast looks, she strove to fly  
The eager glance of wondering Edmund's eye,  
While the fresh breezes of the mountain air  
Waved like a web of gold her auburn hair.  
Too soon her blushing cheek and azure eyes  
Revenged the slaughter of his feathered prize;  
The youth entranced, embodied seem to see  
The Bard's immortal 'Nymph sweet Liberty,'  
Whom while his heart adored, alas! his own,  
Winged with a sigh, at Love's first call had flown.  
Still bounded Rosahind, nor looked behind,  
Though Edmund's graceful figure filled her mind,

Till as beneath the sacred oak she sped,  
The warning tablet trembled o'er her head;  
With boding heart the prodigy she viewed,  
But virtuous hope her fainting soul renewed,  
While Spring's first roses budding in the grove,  
With promised triumph foiled the darts of Love.

No hope cheered Edmund, now condemned to know  
The torments poets call delicious woe,  
The Hebe peasant agonized his heart,  
Nor dared his tongue th' ignoble flame impart;  
Study no more, nor sylvan pleasures pleased,  
Nor friendship's social joys his sufferings eased;  
Alone he roamed amid the forest shades,  
Or wooed the pensive Muse in moonlight glades.  
In vain Matilda marked the change, in vain  
Tried each maternal art to soothe his pain;

In vain fond Egbert for his sorrows pressed....  
He sighed....and bade them in his bosom rest.  
At length his wishes to distraction grew,  
And to the well remembered rocks he flew;  
There though the oaks still crowned the mountain scene,  
Though still the breeze blew fresh, the fern looked green,  
The goats still browsed, the setting sun shone bright,  
No blue-eyed vision blessed his longing sight.

Now to the woodlands, where with pious care  
The cheerful Rosalind would oft repair,  
Spite of the summer beam, or winter's cold,  
To gather fuel for the sick and old,  
Young Edmund watched her, and in vain essayed  
With vows to move the ever-flying maid.  
Or when rich Autumn spread her clustering store,  
Beside her mother at her vine-wreathed door,

As oft half pleased, half sad, she turned her wheel,  
And mused on him for whom she dared not feel,  
Then in a hunter's manly garb arrayed,  
Bright as Endymion, bursting from the shade,  
Some prey escaped, some loss the lover framed,  
Now pleaded weather, now his courser blamed,  
And words denied, a fleeting glance expressed  
The impassioned anguish of his struggling breast.  
With eye maternal Winifreda viewed  
His soft appeal, and virtue's lore renewed;  
Now prayed, and trembled for her tempted child,  
Now with a mother's pride in secret smiled.

At length by merit conquered Edmund came,  
And yielding, vowed an unoffending flame;  
His only prayer that one revolving year  
Might veil their union from his parents' ear.

Ah, Rosalind! beware his manly grace,  
His pleading sighs, and love-illuminated face.  
How soft his words!....Alas, her heart beat high!  
Again the tablet trembled in her eye.  
Her fancy pictured in the tints of youth,  
The roseate wreath, the milk-white robe of truth;  
She heard Matilda's harp, the festal song,  
Her mother's blessings, and the applauding throng.  
Then fear reversed the anticipated scene,  
The rose grew pale, the meadow lost its green;  
Shame from her temples snatched the envied crown....  
And ah! what wretch could bear Matilda's frown?  
Could live to hear her mild complaints upbraid  
Her Edmund, plighted to a peasant maid?  
Ah no!....if Love himself should tell his pain,  
Still would she live a nymph of Cynthia's train.

True to her yow, to grateful honour true,  
The fair denied, and far young Edmund flew,  
Despairing, sad, forsook his native plain,  
And sought by travel to forget his pain;  
Love sickens at the touch of honest pride,  
And in his manly bosom, pined, and died.

    In beauty equal to the blue-eyed maid,  
The gentle Marian sighed amid the shade,  
Nor sighed for love; resistless duty there,  
A willing captive, chained the stedfast fair.  
Deep in the tangled mazes of the wood,  
Far from resort, her brother's cottage stood,  
With him she dwelt, and shared, by Pity given,  
A task ordained to smoothe her path to Heaven.  
Full rose her bosom, as the dove's wing fair;  
Dark flowed the tresses of her silken hair;



But care had paled the lustre of her cheek,  
Her eyes were milder, and her mien more meek;  
Still in those eyes such true expression dwelt  
Of all she practised, and of all she felt;  
So sweet her accents, and so soft her air,  
That shepherds pitied, and adored the fair.  
In vain they pitied, and in vain they pressed,  
No weak emotion struggled in her breast.  
Forsaken orphan! at an age to miss  
A mother's fond reproof, a mother's kiss,  
She ne'er forgot a dying mother's prayer,  
Who left a hapless sister to her care,  
On whom in vain had infant beauty smiled,  
Fever subdued, and madness grasped the child.  
Nor unrequited care, nor long restraint,  
Nor scenes of dread made Marian's courage faint.

As Heaven to blossoms tempers adverse winds,  
Hope tempers misery to feeling minds.  
Oft when the nymphs their festal evenings kept,  
She watched the bed of woe till frenzy slept,  
Then with sad pleasure mused on moments past,  
When every sun rose brighter than the last,  
Or cheered her prospect with the fragrant prize,  
Though scarce to hope her timid wishes rise.

A year had fled since in happier hours,  
Young Marian blushing under fruits and flowers,  
To Egbert's castle grateful offerings bore,  
And join'd her mite to grandeur's sumptuous store.  
Her Marian's gifts Matilda's smile approved;  
Her modest eye, her bashful grace she loved;  
On her retiring merit ne'er was lost,  
She deemed it safest, and she prized it most,

And warm to sensibility's appeals,  
 Loved to teach diffidence what courage feels.  
 Thus while the trembling doubt repressed desire,  
 She bade her Marian to the rose aspire,  
 And since stern fate had proved her angel mind  
 Bright as her form, and as her features kind,  
 The friendly hope to anxious wishes rose  
 That Virtue's meed might soothe the damsel's woes.

And now though last not least, in virgin pride  
 Advance sweet tenant of the river's side,  
 Bright stranger! thou whose wayward doom, and name,  
 Must from the Muse a sad digression claim.

Close on the stream that wanders through my lay,  
 A hut and nets a fisher's wealth display;  
 There many a year, of storms nor floods afraid,  
 Had Cymry Owain plied the wily trade,

Oft with adventurous bark would stray from home,  
And tempting danger, to the ocean roam.  
Once when the waves rolled high, the winds roared loud,  
With humbled sail the foaming tide he ploughed,  
When on a rock a surge-beat vessel bore;  
Down sunk the shrieking crew, and rose no more,  
Save one young female whom the buoyant wave,  
And Nature, pitying Nature strove to save.  
An infant to her cold maternal breast  
With terror's strong convulsive grasp she pressed;  
A powerful net the affrighted fisher cast;  
The babe revived, the mother breathed her last.  
Then with his helpless charge too weak to weep,  
Rocked by the heaving of the boat to sleep,  
With double zeal he plied his wearied oar,  
And brought her safe to Milton's happy shore.

Now should my numbers in romantic strain  
 Her birth unfold, and wild adventures feign,  
 But spite of Poesy for fiction famed,  
 She grew in beauty, but was never claimed,  
 A coral cross the sea-born baby wore,  
 And sea-born Coral was the name she bore.

Old Cymry Owain was a childless man:  
 With Coral's smile a father's care began.  
 One trite, but sterling maxim trained her youth,  
 'Do good, shun evil, ever speak the truth.'  
 This precept still he preached, 'twas all he knew,  
 But, unlike some who preach, he practised too.  
 And now his trembling limbs, and failing sight,  
 Bade Coral's care his guardian care requite;  
 When o'er the hills his feeble steps he bent,  
 And on her ready arm for succour leant,

He blessed the wave that from its bosom gave  
An angel guide to lead him to the grave.  
Nor had blind age his doating fancy led  
O'er her loved form imagined charms to shed,  
Her graceful stature, and distinguished mien,  
Stamped her with one accord the village queen.  
Her clear brown hue, more rare in Britain's isle,  
Enhanced the vivid lightning of her smile,  
When sparkling mirth through vermeil lips displayed  
The pearly treasures of the river maid;  
While on her cheek health's animating dyes  
Increased the brilliance of her large dark eyes.  
When fondly tending him, whose silver hairs  
With silent eloquence engaged her cares,  
Spring's early blossom seemed the blooming maid  
When Winter's snow still lingers in the shade.

Matilda with approving eye beheld,  
And joyed to see her glorious aim excelled,  
For ne'er till now had Milton village known  
At once three claimants of the roseate crown.



## THE FESTIVAL OF THE ROSE.

### PART THE SECOND.

O Music! Heaven whose breath thy song inspires,  
Seraphic hosts in endless youth attires:  
From earth the voice of innocence conveys  
The purest incense of celestial praise,



And when Matilda to the holy fane  
With mild persuasion drew the village train,  
And mid her virgins struck the golden lyre,  
She seemed Cecilia with her sainted choir.

    'Twas the most sacred of those solemn days  
Whose rites religious piety obeys,  
Matilda summoned her melodious train  
To wake to gratitude a holy strain.  
High mid the vocal throng was Coral's name,  
No strain was music but when Coral came,  
Untaught, unimitating, Nature's child,  
So sweet she warbled forth her carols wild,  
So clear they floated on the silent air,  
It seemed some Syren had endowed the fair:  
But when inspired she hymned to simple lays  
In plaintive harmonies her Maker's praise,

Waked to new sense the unfeeling learned to feel,  
And angels listen'd to the soft appeal.

The deep bell called, the morning shone serene,  
And Coral in her country vest of green,  
Hope's cheerful hue, whose visions filled her breast,  
The church-way path with fond obedience pressed.  
Her zeal might own a secondary cause,  
But judge the nymph by Nature's gentle laws;  
Her Arthur haply waited on the green  
To meet with looks of love the village queen.  
Nor think Matilda frowned on virtuous love,  
The amorous reed oft sighed in Milton's grove;  
Her constant heart too well the blessing knew  
Of long attachment to one object true.  
Among the swains one youth above the rest  
With manly worth, and manly beauty blest,

For lovely Coral had confessed a flame,  
Nor did the maid deny his pleaded claim;  
But when her willing heart in change was given,  
A purpose sacred in the sight of Heaven,  
Checked by his sigh, and watered with her tear,  
Chilled the warm hope, but made that hope more dear,  
No bridal rite she vowed should fix her doom,  
Till the grass waved o'er ancient Cymry's tomb.

The path wound steeply from the river's side  
Through groves with Flora's early treasures dyed,  
Amid their bloom the rill a moment slept,  
And formed a glassy pool by Naiads kept,  
So clear the water, so surpassing praise,  
What nymph could view, and not remain to gaze?  
Ah, hapless Coral! 'twas some fiend that took  
The spotless semblance of this limpid brook,

Nor could the green-haired sylph thy honours save,  
Who saved thy beauties from a watry grave.  
Breathless she reached the spot; its cooling shade,  
And tempting mirror charmed the truant maid,  
Who held by vain delight forgot, I ween,  
The church, the choir, even Arthur on the green.  
Still as she gazed, Love ever danger's guide,  
Her swain conducted to the fatal tide,  
Softly to chide her lingering step he came,  
But staid to press for what he meant to blame.  
Ah! never, never let the fair delay,  
When love, accepted love, implores her stay,  
When Zephyr's breath, and beechen bowers invite  
To converse sweet, and undisguised delight.  
Though Virtue still her spell on Coral kept,  
Her handmaid Prudence lulled by flattery slept;

Bright as she was, an offering culled by love  
Might add one smile, and ev'n her charms improve;  
Her shepherd-hat a string of wood-bells bound....  
To deck her bosom could no flowers be found?....  
In vain to woo the lover's choice they pressed,  
Each when compared her passing bloom confessed.  
A wild rose smiled....her blushes made it pale;....  
The violet....no....her breath would scent the gale;  
Her bosom was so exquisitely fair  
It seemed the sun had feared to trespass there;  
A lily on the snow could not be seen....  
At length a blossom won still robed in green,  
But ah! no more soft hope it emblomed now....  
Shame and dismay obscured her radiant brow,  
When Echo wafted from the hallowed ground  
The last vibration of the solemn sound.

Ere at the porch arrived the panting fair  
Alas! the hour was past to enter there,  
While from the vaulted dome clear accents rise,  
And seem to lift a spirit to the skies.  
To her, unusual sweetness marked the strain,  
For ever banished from the vocal train,  
For life excluded from the roseate throne,  
And doomed to weep unpitied, and alone,  
For ne'er again should Arthur's flatteries move,  
All, all her grief she owed to him and love.  
And 'O kind guardian of my youth!' she cried,  
'Whose pity saved me from the angry tide,  
'May Powers of mercy veil from thee the blame,  
'Nor rumour pierce thy ear with Coral's shame.'  
Her grateful wishes were not lost in air,  
But ah! no pitying angel heard her prayer.

She reached her cot with quick, disordered pace,  
Grief's first impression on her speaking face,  
As clouds surcharged distilling lucid tears,  
So mid her ebon curls the maid appears,  
But Cymry Owain was not doomed to know  
His Coral's penitence, his Coral's woe;  
Adorned with trophies of his former deeds,  
With wonders of the deep, with shells, and weeds,  
Lo! in a bower where oft, with age opprest,  
Nursed by the noontide beam he loved to rest,  
As if too weak to see his darling weep,  
The good old man had sunk to endless sleep.  
To paint her anguish words and numbers fail,  
And like Apelles drop, O Muse! the veil.

    In the old castle hall, the seat of state,  
Was kept the record of mysterious fate,

For none who wrote, with daring eye might look  
On the past pages of the sacred book.  
There strictly registered, the deeds and name  
Of each fair candidate were traced by fame;  
But hearts so upright marked this village train  
That each complaint seemed urged with honest pain.  
Full many a wrested truth the leaf contained,  
One only falsehood had its bosom stained,  
That stain (O pause my lyre a moment here)  
Demands the meed of one digressive tear,  
For ah! it nipped in bud the sweetest flower  
That ever bloomed in Love's delicious bower,  
Lost Jessy thou! whose grief-devoted name  
Speaks to each heart that ever felt a flame.  
Her lover waited but one day, with pride,  
Crowned with the rose, to call the fair his bride,



No voice demurred, no rival could arise,  
By every modest hope she claimed the prize,  
When by a slander traced that fatal morn,  
From their fond grasp was every blessing torn.  
So deeply venomed was the well-forged tale,  
Friendship believed, and chastity turned pale.  
Her lover framed in honour's sternest mould,  
By passion fired, by pity uncontrolled,  
With frantic agony forsook the ground,  
And left his Jessy fainting with the wound.  
Truth soon dispelled the cloud, her fame was cleared,  
But ne'er again the wretched youth appeared,  
In climes of death he mourned her fancied shame,  
And breathed his last repeating Jessy's name.  
She, like a blossom seized by gelid dew,  
With patient sighs bade every joy adieu,

And ere a year's revolving moons were o'er,  
Sought her rash lover on a safer shore.  
A fate as dire awaited Rosa's youth,  
But angels hovered o'er the child of truth.

As weeds are mid the fairest harvest found,  
Near Milton lived a thing for spite renowned,  
With blight malignant cankering every breast,  
It best personified the bleak north-east.  
Ask not its age, or shape, or whence it came,  
Nor maid nor matron old shall bear the shame;  
None question ghosts who in their chambers glare,  
Already horror struck to find them there;  
But since its attributes a witch might claim,  
Her sex be woman's, Sycorax her name.  
Her early years, her early vices grew  
In the rank culture of a gipsy crew,

Who taught the imp to blandish at command,  
Or cross with omen dire the trusting hand;  
To croak wild ballads, and in wizard rhymes  
Recite terrific tales of ancient times.

By arts like these she saved a scanty store,  
And to this spot her pelf and malice bore,  
Where long she dwelt, her origin unasked,  
For with industrious zeal her hours she tasked,  
And with a mien demure, and rigid tone,  
Decried all virtue to enhance her own.

The old endured her in this sweet retreat  
As peasants place a scare-crow in their wheat,  
While, as the Indian worships fiends, the young  
Submissive bowed to deprecate her tongue.

But blue-eyed Rosalind, as pure as gay,  
Defied her spleen, or smiled the sting away;

Hence this hyena looked with stedfast hate  
On her bright form, her youth, and happy fate;  
Oft in the wood she saw young Edmund wait,  
And oft had watched him to the cottage gate,  
And armed with these offences vowed to tear  
The envied garland from her auburn hair.

Now rose the stated morn with radiance bright,  
And chased the moon-beams from a summer night,  
With throbbing hearts the sleepless nymphs arise,  
But hope's warm glow the wonted bloom supplies.  
Soon to the fane the candidates repair,  
And breathe to Heaven an unassuming prayer,  
That not their merits, but attempts may plead  
A trembling title to the glorious meed.  
To call the shepherds to the festal ground,  
Harps spread their merry minstrelsies around,

And pipes, the music of the mountain scene,  
Mix with the' flute their melodies serene;  
While to the threshold of each chosen maid,  
Matilda by the hand of taste arrayed,  
With groups of sportive children scattering flowers,  
Repaired to lead them from their cottage bowers.  
Light as the fleecy clouds that cooled the day  
O'er her fair limbs concealing draperies play,  
Or clinging round with every breeze, unfold  
The soft proportions of her perfect mould;  
A web of texture fine as insects fling  
From leaf to leaf amid the gems of Spring,  
Waves o'er her polished neck, and clustering hair,  
And shields their beauties from the encroaching air.  
Her ripened charms had passed youth's earliest prime,  
And yet had rather gained, than lost by time,

Her form more full, her features more refined,  
With new intelligence displayed her mind,  
Subsiding blushes gave more conscious ease,  
Gave grace more play, and wit more power to please.  
Adorned in snowy vests, her gifts of love,  
With tresses loose her beauteous virgins move  
In bright procession; at their head is seen  
Rosalind's wild grace, and Marian's modest mien,  
While swarming round in motley colours gay,  
Shines Milton village in its best array.  
Before them, circled with a rustic choir,  
A cherub-form in Zephyrus' attire  
Waves high the blooming chaplet in the air,  
Triumphant ensign of the destined fair!  
But where was Coral? where the village queen?  
Where her quick smile, and animated mien?

Matilda's gentle summons to prevent  
A scroll mysteriously the damsel sent,  
That at her honoured throne she soon would kneel,  
And crave her pardon, and the cause reveal.  
For Coral's fault, so wept, was still unknown,  
With Cymry's spirit all surmise had flown,  
The sudden dart of fate concealed her blame,  
And he who saved her life, had saved her fame.  
Well generous Coral this delusion knew,  
And vowed by Cymry's precepts to be true.  
Long had she purposed in her candid thought  
At loved Matilda's feet to breathe her fault,  
Still as each day returned, her lover's prayer,  
And virgin fears withheld the trembling fair,  
But now alas! the fatal hour was come,  
And Coral stedfast to fulfil her doom.

Where spreading oaks exclude the sultry beam,  
Straight to the new-mown borders of the stream,  
Whose grassy treasures sweetest when they die  
Perfume the breeze, and revel on the eye,  
Advance the troop, and lead with rustic grace  
The kind Matilda to the appointed place.  
A chesnut's sheltering arms with blossoms spread,  
And woodbines hung, o'er-canopy her head,  
Where in hoarse murmurs tumbling from the hill  
Pours in cascades the accumulated rill.  
The lovely candidates in silence wait  
Around her turf-raised throne the award of fate;  
And now the names proclaimed, her mandate given,  
In accents gentle as the breeze of Heaven  
The sound of blended flutes in breathings clear  
Calls youthful Marian first to rise and hear.



Soon as the page unfolds its ivory breast,  
With notes of more than life and death impressed,  
The timid maid of fair and tender form  
Droops like a silver lily in the storm;  
But when the harmony of well-earned praise  
Her mild perfections speaks in softest lays,  
When the blunt tribute of unvarnished truth  
With honest warmth extols her matchless youth,  
Her cares, her patient tenderness appear,  
And wound while they delight her modest ear,  
She seems that lily when reviving rays  
Gild her white bells, and on her beauties gaze.  
Applauding murmurs through the hallowed ground  
Mixed with the name of peerless Marian sound.  
When like the moon emerging from her shroud,  
The dusky bosom of a midnight cloud,

In deep confusion and in sable dress,  
Lo! mid the wondering throng is seen to press  
A lovely vision, who dissolved in tears  
Prostrate before Matilda's feet appears,  
Repentant Coral! who her presence sought  
To own her folly, and lament her fault,  
To crave one smile from her, and then disclaim  
The hope of triumph, and the wreath of fame.  
While spake the maiden, to herself severe,  
On every cheek appeared an answering tear,  
The dew of praise, in early youth to find  
So pure a model of a noble mind.  
The eager villagers with one accord  
Hailed Coral worthy of the bright reward,  
But justice first impelled the impartial dame  
To hear unblemished Rosalinda's claim.

And now the merry harp proclaims her turn,  
Her blue eyes sparkle, and her blushes burn,  
But lo! an arrow from a hidden bow  
Strikes not with more dismay the wounded doe,  
Than (would that pity had the stain effaced)  
These strange devices on the tablet traced.

Lady beware, Lady beware!

All are not fair that seem so fair;  
Spite of thy frown, who claims the crown  
Thy crown would wear.

Lady beware!

Lady so kind, Lady so kind!  
Unkind is faithless Rosalind,  
Who claims the Rose, with thorny woes  
Thy brows would bind.  
Lady so kind!

Lady beware, Lady beware!

Where is thy son, O where, O where?

Spite of thy tears, soon he appears,

And weds the fair.

Lady beware!

In speechless agony the damsel stood,

And horror from her red cheeks stole the blood.

Her tender parent with the shock oppressed,

Strove to defend, and fainted on her breast.

The good Matilda racked with doubts and fears,

Now spurns the thought, now sheds maternal tears,

While acclamations rend the azure skies,

‘ Queen of the garland, virtuous Marian, rise,

‘ Thou only perfect, thou deserv’st the prize!’

When as Matilda rose with mournful grace

On Marian’s brows the votive flowers to place,

Resounding wheels, the hoof of mettled steeds,  
Arrest her purpose, and the maid recedes,  
For see alighting on the festal green,  
A happy group illuminates the scene;  
The noble Egbert with paternal pride  
Conducting Edmund and a lovely bride.  
From soft Ausonian shores this beauty came,  
Bright as her clime, and of illustrious name;  
Beneath refulgent skies, in fragrant groves  
Where even cold Apathy relenting loves,  
This fair enchantress by a mutual flame  
Had cancelled humble Rosalinda's claim,  
And by a guardian's avarice doomed to wed,  
From hateful chains with love and Edmund fled.

Again the blush of Rosalind appeared,  
To see her triumph near, her honour cleared,

Pressed to Matilda's sympathising breast,  
Her tears found passage, and her feelings rest,  
While Edmund told with all the fire of youth  
Her long resistance, and unshaken truth.

Now strike the lyre! and now with loud acclaim  
Let Echo dwell on Rosalinda's name!  
Who lowly kneeling, from the virtuous dame  
Received the recompense of well-earned fame,  
While Love lay hid among the enraptured swains,  
And threatened vengeance for his slighted pains.  
The gentle Marian with a meek embrace,  
And sister's greeting, yields with matchless grace,  
A brighter palm her piety repaid,  
And crowned with joy the unassuming maid,  
Health spread her blooming wings, by Mercy led,  
And from the weeping cottage Frenzy fled.

Ingenuous Coral by her sorrows proved,  
Blessed with her hand and heart the youth she loved,  
And the loathed Sybil who confessed her crime,  
Abhorred and exiled, fled the happy clime.

Matilda's bliss refined let those explain,  
Approved of Heaven, who have not lived in vain.  
'Twas this fond aim inspired my trembling lay,  
This aim shall chace the critic's frown away;  
An aim fulfilled, if in some spot serene  
Where Virtue still protects the hamlet scene,  
Warmed with my verse one young enthusiast cries,  
' O happy Rosalind that gained the prize!'

THE END.

THE  
LAY OF THE RED-BREAST.

Mothers, who mourn a darling child,  
Oh hear what once with tears I heard!  
A wild and plaintive ditty sung  
By Pity's rosy-breasted bird.

All on a rainy day she sat  
Where yews dispense a deadly gloom,  
On a dark bough, near yonder spire  
That marks the lost Aurora's tomb.

Thence she beheld the village throng  
(For innocence the village weeps)  
With Death's funereal emblems strew  
The spot where infant beauty sleeps.



‘ Oh,’ sung the warbler, ‘ gifts like these  
‘ Suit not her bloom, her tender years!  
‘ Ah no!....Spring’s earliest treasures bring,  
‘ Wet with the morning’s balmy tears.  
  
‘ Shall the gay fair whose transient bliss  
‘ A few short hours may snatch away,  
‘ With hymeneal wreaths be crowned,  
‘ And wake the minstrel’s raptured lay?  
  
‘ And she, who wafted to the skies,  
‘ An angel host expecting meets,  
‘ Be called to earth with sighs and groans,  
‘ Nor claim young Nature’s choicest sweets?’

She paused....and when in silent woe  
The mourners from the scene withdrew,  
She brought fresh blossoms to the grave,  
Of every scent, of every hue.

And sung, while scattering odours round,  
A song of mingled joy and grief,  
For her, who many a wintry day  
Had brought her feathered friends relief.

‘ Lost benefactress, sweet, and pure,  
‘ Whose short life guilt nor sorrow knew,  
‘ That feeling soothed a mother’s pangs,  
‘ When every blessing sunk with you.  
•  
‘ Heaven touched to view a fate so rare,  
‘ Forbade the miracle to cease;  
‘ Stamped Cherub on thy beauteous form,  
‘ And bore thee to eternal peace.’

## A B S E N C E.

Ye who in many a heart-felt line  
Each tender sentiment enshrine,  
And while your grief away!  
Fond lovers, if ye never heard  
The legend of the carrier-bird,  
Now listen to my lay!

Hear first how Cytherea's dove,  
Instructed by the god of love,  
At beauty's call obeyed,  
And safe beneath his azure wings  
A thousand moving melting things  
From soul to soul conveyed.

In days of yore, a gentle youth,  
The child of industry and truth,  
Lived far from court or town;  
A flock he owned, the shepherd's wealth,  
A shepherd's glory, strength and health,  
And peace, the shepherd's crown.

He dwelt on Jessop's wooded hill,  
From whose cool brow a mazy rill  
Steals through the rocks below,  
Lost where the Tavy smoothly glides  
To meet the ocean's briny tides,  
Expanding as they flow.

Full oft, my Muse! thy faltering tongue,  
Oft has the bard enraptured sung  
The bliss that shepherds prove;

Yet even Arcadia's groves complain  
Our merry Silvio knew not pain,  
For yet he knew not love.

Love, idle Love! the plough disdains,  
Nor seeks his prey on sun-burnt plains,  
But spares the toilsome train;  
Thus long had Silvio foiled his power,  
Till in a careless noontide hour  
An arrow pierced the swain.

'Twas in a rock's embowered recess,  
Adorned in Nature's choicest dress,  
With moss and ivy bound,  
Our shepherd on a holiday,  
As by the stream he listless lay,  
Received the fatal wound.

Rosa, the prettiest village maid  
That ever danced in greenwood shade,  
First taught the youth to sigh,  
As from the river's farther side  
Adventuring through the ebbing tide  
She caught his vagrant eye.

Her skirts outgrown just veiled her knees,  
A fisher's net with graceful ease  
Was o'er her shoulder thrown,  
Unbound her nut-brown curling hair,  
White mid the wave her legs were bare,  
And Silvio's heart was gone.

His farm and flocks now charm no more,  
He trimmed the bark, he plied the oar,  
Implored each Nereid's care;

At flood he daily stemmed the tide,  
Or when the faithless waves denied,  
A pilgrim wooed the fair.

Nor think his hand the distaff held,  
Like Hercules by Love impelled,  
As idle poets dream;  
With her he loved to labour still,  
With her to climb the burnished hill,  
With her to fish the stream.

But summer fades, a transient friend,  
The billows foam, the rains descend,  
And blackening torrents swell;  
Oh then how hope's gay visions fly,  
How oft the hour-glass wounds his eye,  
True love alone can tell!

To cheer his heart unused to grief,  
No welcome message brought relief,  
    Deluding time and space;  
No tablet where a lover's eyes  
The words, the voice, the looks, the sighs  
    Of her he loves can trace.

But Love inventive, soothed his woes;  
From Love Apelles' art arose;  
    Love's music fills the grove;  
Haply some future bard may show  
That kings and politicians owe  
    Their telegraphs to Love.

Safe from the hawk a dove-cote long  
Our Silvio's rural stores among,  
    His fostering care had claimed;



His gift, upon her swelling breast,  
One favourite pigeon Rosa pressed,  
And with caresses tamed.

But ah! with meals of sweetest grain  
Silvio now lured his mate in vain,  
Still pined the widowed bird;  
Till as one early morn he hied  
With wistful looks to watch the tide,  
A fluttering sound he heard.

High poised in air, 'twas Rosa's dove,  
Who speeded by the voice of Love,  
Despised the threatening sky;  
Each dawn he came to nature true,  
Then back to Rosa's bosom flew,  
And left her swain to sigh;

For little hopeless Silvio thought  
How many a kiss the rover brought  
Across the watery waste;  
Then ah! what rapture when he spied  
These words beneath his pinion tied,  
In artless cyphers traced.

‘ I love thee still,’ the shepherd cried,  
‘ I love thee still,’ the woods replied,  
And every scene was gay;  
And Tayy’s echoing shores repeat,  
‘ I love thee still,’ in accents sweet,  
And lovers bless the day.


## C H A R L O T T E,

recovered from a dangerous illness in which her life was despaired of,  
the consequence of WERTER's rash action, repairs to his tomb  
at midnight, the hour in which her unfortunate lover put an end  
to his existence.

Sad through the leafless grove the tempest sighs,  
A watery moon-beam points where Werter lies;  
The fatal hour returns, and mid the gloom  
Lost Charlotte seeks her lover's grassy tomb;  
Heedless of fame she grants his last request,  
And nightly bids his mournful spirit rest;  
Dishevelled, pale, with feeble step she goes,  
Dead to all common pain, through piercing snows;  
Dry is her cheek, but sorrow racks her frame;  
She kneels, and calls on Werter's fatal name;

'Werter,' she cries, 'rash Werter! couldst thou see  
 Thy Charlotte, sad reverse! now seeking thee,  
 Behold her tottering from the bed of death,  
 Her matron honours stained by slander's breath,  
 Her beauty blasted in life's vernal morn,  
 And Albert's friendship changed to doubt and scorn,  
 Even in the grave thy restless ghost would grieve,  
 And madly as to die now wish to live.  
 Ah wretched youth! what love had never won  
 Thy death has gained, and Charlotte is undone.  
 The victim of regret, and wild despair,  
 Each caution of my sex I give to air,  
 Forget each sacred tie, and dead to shame,  
 Hate my cold heart that could resent thy flame,  
 I hear thy groan, I catch thy parting breath,  
 And envy thee the sad repose of death,

Then frantic, lost, to end my woes I fly,  
And cry, if Werter died, let Charlotte die....  
But ah! a woman's terrors hold my hand,  
And shuddering at the impious thought I stand,  
A mother's dying words I seem to hear,  
Her helpless infants to my sight appear,  
Yes....still to innocence is Charlotte dear....  
Then tears relieve the anguish of my breast,  
And now they flow....O where shall sorrow rest?  
Speak, Werter, speak!....alas, alas! I rave,  
Or sure thy spirit warns me from the grave.'....  
' O Charlotte, turn thy wild complaints to prayer,  
Nor deepen Werter's guilt by thy despair;  
Thy pious vows shall calm the wrath of Heaven,  
And at thy call his errors be forgiven;  
So shalt thou meet him in the realms of peace,  
Where love betrays no more, and sorrows cease.'



With holy awe, with fervent hope impressed,

Now blissful visions soothe her soul to rest;

No more she raves, no more her vigil keeps....

Yet, when she prays for Werter, Charlotte weeps.

## TO MY PIANO-FORTE.

No more, my lyre, indulge my woe,  
O gently breathe a soothing strain!  
While thus thy mournful measures flow  
My anguished spirit bleeds again!

I ask no soul-inspiring sound,  
Thou faithful, sympathizing friend!  
No chords that bid the feelings bound,  
And bursts of sudden rapture lend.

Nor such as made each pulse dilate  
In youth, when promised joy allured,  
When every transient wound of fate  
Thy mirth awakening cadence cured.

Nor softer melodies I seek,  
Such as from thee I careless drew,  
What those expressive accents speak  
Ere yet my answering bosom knew.

But yield me all that Pity gives,  
Low, lulling sounds instilling calm,  
Peace that in Hope's illusion lives,  
And kind Affection's whispered balm.

Mild as the rainbow's mellowed hues,  
Thy deep accords, thy clear notes blend,  
Raise vanished hours where fancy views  
The native scene, the parted friend.

And if regret still mingles there,  
If Memory changes bliss to pain,  
My soul with swells harmonious bear  
To heaven, where rest and music reign.



## I N S T I N C T.

## ▲ FACT.

When May with verdure decked the bowers,  
And called the rosy-bosomed hours,  
While music filled the grove,  
A tuft of filberts in my field  
With clustering leaves a nest concealed,  
Built by a faithful pair.

Of linnets, tenants of the grove,  
O ne'er in Spring did nuptial love  
Two fonder birds unite!  
Their vermeil-painted bosoms seen  
Among the dark embowering green,  
Appeared like coral bright.

With feathers lined, of roots and leaves,  
A nest their callow brood receives;

What words can paint their care?  
But short their bliss....a school-boy saw,  
And unrestrain'd by pity's law,  
Took aim, and shot the pair.

To me he brought the cradling nest;  
I warmed the orphans in my breast,  
And searched the grove for food:  
Alas! each dainty lured in vain,  
Nor worms, nor seeds, nor moistened grain  
Could tempt the pining brood.

Brought from Canaria's Isles, encaged,  
Long had a bird my love engaged,  
And charmed my lonely hours;

Though doomed no social joys to share,  
Yet tamed by custom, free from care,  
She fluttered mid my flowers.

But instant as the virgin bird  
The note of infant nestlings heard,  
By mighty instinct led,  
No more her crystal fount delights,  
Nor perch, nor groundsel feast invites,  
She droops her golden head.

At once grown conscious of controul,  
With all the mother in her soul  
She answered to their cry:  
Curious to trace great Nature's lore,  
I quick unbarred her glittering door,  
And let the captive fly.

Then cowering o'er the long-chilled nest,  
With anxious chirps she fondly pressed  
Each suppliant bird to feed;  
While Charity with melting eye  
Observed, and from the azure sky  
Bade Pity mark the deed.

## D E L I R I U M.

‘Hear’st thou yon screams that rend the air?

Hark!....’tis the gipsey beats my child!....

She drags her by her golden hair!....

O!....why thus hold me?....Am I wild?

Now, even now my babe expires,

Stripped, on the ground, to cold a prey:

Great God! hast thou not tenfold fires

For her who tore my soul away?

Yes, from yon pale star flashes rise;

It was, it was my cherub smiled....

I come....’ the frantic mother cries,

And flies to heaven to seek her child.

## J E P H T H A H.

The harp, the flute, the timbrels sound,  
Fair mid the youthful throng,  
See Jephthah's child with myrtles crowned  
Advance with dance and song.

Soon hushed the melody of mirth,  
She meets his trembling eyes,  
And lo! distracted on the earth  
The expected victor lies.

' My father, why this wild despair?  
Why thus with anguish torn?  
Why rend thy venerable hair?  
Why wish thou'dst ne'er been born?

Alas! and dost thou turn from her

Who on thy favour lives?

Though youth through ignorance may err,

A parent still forgives.'

Thus Jephthah's daughter strove to share,

To deprecate his woe,

Till softened by her filial care,

His tears began to flow,

And bursting from his soul in sighs

She heard the fatal truth:

'My child!' in agony he cries,

'My blessing from thy youth.

O daughter! 'tis not me, but thou

Whose task is to forgive;

For know a parent's barbarous vow

Forbids his child to live.'

‘Thy sorrows calm,’ the maid rejoined,

‘O grieve no more for me!

My father, be to Heaven resigned,

As I resigned to thee.

To-day the violet scents the grove,

To-morrow droops and dies....

Free mid the mountains let me rove

Till death that bliss denies.’

Amid her native mountains wild,

Her virgin train among,

For him she mourned, at fate she smiled,

And thus her death-notes sung:

‘Ye haunts of innocent delight,

Ye rocks and woods, farewell!

Your echoes shall the bard invite

A father’s woes to tell.



But say I breathed no woman's sigh,  
That duty ne'er repined,  
That in the flower of life I die,  
Nor cast one look behind.

The vale I scorn; the breeze to woo  
On lofty cliffs I stray;  
Thus when celestial realms I view  
These charms shall fade away.'

Thrice waned the moon, the morn arose,  
The firmament turned pale;  
Fancy would paint a father's woes,  
But feeling drops the veil.

## A DREAM,

in consequence of reading some verses addressed to SOPHIA, on her wearing a wreath of oak in her hair at a ball, an acorn of which was afterwards planted by a friend on the grave of her favourite dog.

Last night transported by a painful dream,  
Pensive I hung o'er Trent's translucent stream,  
And marked the banks reflected in the wave  
Where Friendship dug Fidelity a grave.  
O fairy Sleep, whom time and space obey!  
Methought a hundred years had pass'd away;  
Methought an ancient oak in moss arrayed,  
Dispensed a soft, but melancholy shade.

A thousand mournful memories marked this oak,  
A thousand scenes of past delight it spoke;  
Grief for a sister smote me as I slept,  
And while my eyes were closed, my fancy wept.  
Sudden I changed....with powerless grasp I tried  
To snatch green garlands from its knotted side,  
When armed with frowns, the Genius of the wood  
Unveiled to sight in awful beauty stood.  
'Beware!' with more than mortal voice he cried,  
'Nor wound my favourite's venerable pride,  
Whose infant years with early triumphs crowned,  
In acorn chaplets Beauty's tresses bound;  
Whose riper age in this once happy grove  
Sophia's care confessed, and claimed her love.'  
O fate of man! shall gems coeval thrive,  
And she alone in Memory's dream survive?....

Where are those smiles dispensing gay delight?  
Where that fair form with youth and sweetness bright?  
For her in vain arose the grateful prayer,  
Poured from the cheered abodes of want and care;  
In vain for her were filial sorrows shed....  
The pang awoke me, and the vision fled.

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